

HCS HB 1584 -- PRIVATE PROBATION SERVICES

SPONSOR: Hill

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Corrections by a vote of 11 to 0. Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Select Committee on Judiciary by a vote of 8 to 0.

This bill specifies that in all cases utilizing private probation services, the Department of Corrections' standards and procedures regarding drug and alcohol screening for clients must be used, and clients must not be required to travel in excess of 50 miles in order to attend their regular parole meetings.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this bill does not eliminate private probation services, but instead ensures that probation services providers use the same illicit substances testing methods and standardize the travel requirements for individuals on probation. Some individuals on private probation must travel some distance to receive their probation services. In 2013, 83% of our circuit courts have contracts with private probation companies. This bill will have a positive impact on families who have individuals using private probation services. These private probation services have a financial incentive to violate the individuals in their care; the longer an individual is on probation and utilizing mandatory private probation services, the private probation company receives increased revenue. One individual who falsely tested "detected" for alcohol privately obtained a second test that same day that confirmed he was "negative" for alcohol; yet the individual was violated by his private probation service based on the "detected" result, given two more years of probation, four days shock time, and 90 days with a scram bracelet (which costs approximately \$120 to install and another \$100 per month to maintain). This all resulted in a huge financial windfall to the private probation service, because they received the money from the extended private probation cost and the cost of the scram bracelet.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Hill and John DeFries.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.